THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CLASSIFICATION

In 1897 the decision was made to develop a new classification system for the Library of Congress. Charles Martel, chief classifier in the Catalogue Division between 1897 and 1911, oversaw the development of the new system, which was based on the million-volume collections of the Library. Mr. Martel drafted many of the early editions, aided by individual classifiers. In 1917 the Classification Division was formed, with Clarence W. Perley serving as chief classifier until 1937. He had previously been a classifier under Mr. Martel and had himself prepared early editions of a number of schedules. In 1941 the Classification Division and the Catalogue Division were reorganized into the Subject Cataloging Division and the Descriptive Cataloging Division. Responsibility for developing the schedules and classifying materials was assigned to the new Subject Cataloging Division, which also took on the other task of subject analysis, that of creating and assigning subject headings. In 1989 the responsibility for preparing and publishing the schedules and for providing policy guidance was transferred to the Office for Subject Cataloging Policy when that office was separated from the Subject Cataloging Division. Under a 1992 reorganization of cataloging at the Library of Congress, these responsibilities were absorbed into the newly created Cataloging Policy and Support Office. As part of the 2007 reorganization of the Acquisitions and Bibliographic directorate, the name of the Cataloging Policy and Support Office was changed to the Policy and Standards Division.

The original organization of the classification was according to broad disciplines as seen a century ago. Since interdisciplinary topics were difficult to accommodate in this system, many arbitrary choices have been made over the years. Each schedule was developed separately, following its own internal logic. The order of topics, types of captions, level of detail, form of notes, etc., reflects the material being classified and the style of those involved in its creation, application, and development. As a result, each schedule has unique features, and it is difficult to generalize about the schedules as a whole.

Conversion of Library of Congress classification data to machine-readable form using the USMARC format for classification data began in 1992. By 2001 all schedules had been converted and republished in new editions. Since 2002 the classification has been available online through *Classification Web*, which is the official version of the LC Classification, updated daily. Details about ordering and pricing may be obtained from the Cataloging Distribution Service at

<http://www.loc.gov/cds>

The current published classification schedules are the result of the combined efforts of catalogers, editors, and policy specialists. Catalogers propose new or changed class numbers when required by new material being cataloged, and formulate major developments as

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time permits.   Editorial staff then review the proposals for conformity to general practices, create index entries, and produce a list for review by policy specialists and other staff at the monthly editorial meeting.   The developments approved at the editorial meeting are incorporated into *Classification Web*.   New printed editions of LC schedules are produced as needed.   Policy specialists provide overall guidance and may edit the subject content of schedules.   New law schedules are developed by the law classification specialist in the Policy and Standards Division.

Additional information about the Library of Congress Classification is available on the World Wide Web at

<http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcc.html>

*ORDER OF PUBLICATION OF THE ORIGINAL EDITIONS
OF THE LC CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULES*

1901	*E-F*	History: America (Western Hemisphere)
1902	*Z*	Bibliography. Library science
1904	*M*	Music
1905	*Q*	Science
1910	*B-BJ*	Philosophy. Psychology
	G	Geography. Anthropology. Recreation
	H	Social sciences
	J	Political science
	N	Fine arts
	R	Medicine
	T	Technology
	U	Military science
	V	Naval science
1911	*A*	General works
	L	Education
	S	Agriculture
1915	*C*	Auxiliary sciences of history
	PN, PR, PS, PZ	General literature. English and American literature. Fiction in English. Juvenile literature
1916	*D*	History: General and old world (Eastern Hemisphere)
1927	*BL-BX*	Religion
1928	*P-PA*	General philology and linguistics. Classical languages and literatures.
1933	*PB-PH*	Modern European languages

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1935	*PJ-PM*	Languages and literatures of Asia, Africa, Oceania. American Indian languages. Artificial languages
1936	*P-PM Supplement*	Index to languages and dialects
	PQ (Part 1)	French literature
1937	*PQ (Part 2)*	Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese literatures
1938	*PT (Part 1)*	German literature
1942	*PA Supplement*	Byzantine and modern Greek literature. Medieval and modern Latin literature
	PT (Part 2)	Dutch and Scandinavian literatures
1948	*PG*	Russian literature
1969	*KF*	Law of the United States
1973	*KD*	Law of the United Kingdom and Ireland
1976	*KE*	Law of Canada
1977	*K*	Law (General)
1982	*KK-KKC*	Law of Germany
1984	*KDZ, KG-KH*	Law of the Americas, Latin America, and the West Indies
1985	*KJV-KJW*	Law of France
1989	*KJ-KKZ*	Law of Europe
1993	*KL-KWX*	Law of Asia and Eurasia, Africa, Pacific Area, and Antarctica
1997	KZ	Law of nations
2004	*KB*	Religious law

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SHELFLIST AND SHELFLISTING HISTORY

The Library of Congress sheet shelflist, created between 1897 and 1940, was the forerunner of the card shelflist. The sheet shelflist was originally maintained on sheets encased in red buckram portfolios, although some classes (M, Z, and parts of P) were recorded on 3x5" cards. Holdings and location information were listed, including holdings for serials.   In 1940 all newly processed entries began to be listed on cards and interfiled into the existing card shelflist. In 1942 serials holdings began to be recorded in the Serial Record division.   Until the information from the sheet shelflist was converted onto cards, it remained the only source of information for thousands of entries.

The card shelflist, housed in more than 13,000 card trays, contained over 100 years of cataloging history.   It contained cards arranged according to earlier editions of classification schedules and earlier filing rules.   Information on more than 12 million 3x5" cards (printed catalog cards as well as shelflist information cards) gave not only the shelf location of every fully classified monograph and serial, but also holdings information—how many volumes and copies of a monograph title there were and where in the Library each was located.

From 1967 to 1999 many cataloging activities at the Library were automated, using MUMS (Multiple-Use Marc System), an in-house system developed specifically to fulfill requirements at the Library of Congress.   It provided for online input and updating of bibliographic and authority records, including the completion of call numbers.

The online shelflist began in 1999 when the Library adopted Voyager as its integrated library system.   At that time the card shelflist was closed.   New records were available only in the online system.   The card shelflist was dispersed to different buildings in 2004-2005 in order to accommodate the growing space needs of non-cataloging staff.

At the Library of Congress, shelflisting was an activity generally separated from classification until 2005.   Staff members in a special unit completed the call number after catalogers assigned subject headings and class numbers.   By 1991 the Shelflisting section of the Subject Cataloging division (1941-1992) consisted of 69 staff members in seven units: General (A-G, L), Social Sciences (H-J), Law (K), Language and Literature (N, P), Science and Technology (Q-V), Serials (Z, Serials), and Shelflist Services.   In the whole book reorganization of 1992, the Subject Cataloging division and the Shelflisting section were disbanded and the staff reallocated to the 42 new cataloging teams.

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SIGNIFICANT DATES IN LC SHELFLISTING HISTORY

1897	Decision is made to develop a new classification to replace the Jefferson scheme; Beginning of the sheet shelflist
1940	All shelflist entries are made on cards filed into the card shelflist
1941	Shelflisting becomes part of the new Subject Cataloging division
1971	Shelflist Information Cards (SLICs) are introduced
1974	Library discontinues using A Cutters for documents
1978	Use of a third letter table when assigning Cutter numbers is introduced; as a result Cutter numbers routinely contain two digits instead of only one.
1981	Cataloging divisions are moved from the Adams to the Madison Building; AACR 2 is adopted; Official author-title and subject catalogs are closed, but not the shelflist; New filing rules are implemented in catalogs and the shelflist
1982	Imprint date is added to all monographs
1987	First edition of *Subject Cataloging Manual : Shelflisting* is published
10/1990-10/1992	Dates in CIP call numbers are no longer changed to reflect the actual publication date
1992	Whole book reorganization is implemented: shelflisters are assigned to individual teams
1994	Second edition of *Subject Cataloging Manual : Shelflisting* is published
1999	Voyager is adopted; card shelflist is closed
2004-2005	Card shelflist is dispersed to teams or Adams and Jefferson buildings
2004-2005	Some catalogers begin doing their own shelflisting; experiments with technicians doing copy cataloging begin
2013	RDA is implemented